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No cereal boxes, gift boxes, wrapping paper or ribbons

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owner/publisher

Just the Facts[©]

Friday, Dec. 26, 1997

Hoopeston's only locally-owned daily news publication

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(217) 283-9348

Paper asks city to pay for mistake through reimbursed legal fees

Officials of a local newspaper want Hoopeston officials to pay for their mistakes by reimbursing legal fees.

In a letter to Mayor Bob Ault dated Dec. 22, Howard Hewitt, publisher of the Hoopeston Chronicle, asked the city to pay \$3,292.23, half the legal expenses incurred by the paper in a lawsuit against the city.

The Chronicle sued the city for violation of the Illinois Open Meetings Act, which governs when meetings of public bodies may be closed. The suit said the city's revolving loan committee illegally closed meetings when discussing financial information of loan applicants.

The two sides wrangled for more than a year before a judge ruled earlier this year that the city had violated the Act.

Still undecided is whether the city must pay any of the paper's legal bills, according to city attorney Jim Spiros. "There's been no final judgment ordered," Spiros said. "It's up to the judge's discretion."

Briefly

Open House slated

The Wellington branch of the Community Bank will host a bank appreciation open house in honor of Shirley Moore from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. Monday, Dec. 29.

Moore will be relinquishing her position as Wellington facility manager at the end of 1997.

Customers and friends are invited to attend the open house.

Circuit clerk's office changes policy

Effective Jan. 1, 1998, the Vermilion County Circuit Clerk's offices in Danville and Hoopeston will no longer accept personal checks.

According to the Open Meetings Act, the court "may assess...reasonable attorney's fees and other litigation costs reasonably incurred by any other party who substantially prevails in any action brought in accordance with" the law.

Whether a judge would force the city to pay up is unclear. "There are so few cases out there," Spiros said. "I don't have a crystal ball. Maybe the judge will them them pay it all and maybe he won't make them pay anything."

Also undecided is whether the city will accept the Chronicle's offer.

Hewitt's letter stated that if the city does not pay half by Jan. 15, the Chronicle will seek the full amount through futher legal action.

Spiros said he will meet with officials to discuss which avenue to pursue. Under the Open Meetings Act, that meeting, covering litigation, may be held in closed session.

See PAPER on other side

Payment for fines and other fees must be made by cash, money order, certified check or traveler's check.

Food for Fines

The Hoopeston Public Library is helping the Grant Township Food Cupboard by allowing library patrons to pay overdue fines with items needed by the food cupboard.

Items needed include unopened packages of paper towels, toilet tissue, Kleenex or Puffs facial tissues, paper plates and napkins.

The only food items needed at this time are saltine crackers and soups.

Our Annual

After-Christmas Sale

starts at 9 a.m.

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New Year's Eve Dance

December 31 9 p.m.- 1 a.m.

Hoopeston American Legion

502 E. Penn, Hoopeston

Party Favors Champagne 50-50 Raffle

\$10 per person

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For Keeps

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Bowler captures second Budweiser Tournament crown in a row Sunday at Ridgefarm

Charlie Varner made it two in a row Sunday as he took top honors in the Budweiser Tournament at Ridgeway Lanes in Ridgefarm.

A total of 66 bowlers, 28 on the low side and 28 on the high side, battled for the crown.

Varner came from the high side. That contest started

when Rick Miller battled Vern Payne in a match, only to lose 224-206. Payne then matched against Rich McFarland, defeating him 207-175. Payne advanced to vie against teammate and longtime friend Varner.

Varner, winner of last month's tournament in Hoopeston, pulled out a 242-224 match, advancing on



Police News



Police are investigating a hit-and-run accident reported at 1:45 p.m. Tuesday. Linda S. Brown, 712 E. Main, reported an unknown vehicle struck her 1995 Buick while it was parked at 317 S. Market. The other vehicle then left the scene.

No tickets or injuries were reported in an accident at 4:10 p.m. Tuesday at the Jerry's IGA parking lot, Routes 1 and 9.

Police said Clara I. Haas of 307 Maple, Rossville, in a 1988 Chevrolet, was pulling out of the parking

area when she struck a 1993 Ford driven by Pamela E. Bell, Apt. 5, Benton St., Rossville.

Lori Goodrum of 828 S. Third St., reported Tuesday that someone threw a rock through her bedroom window.

Debbie Nosler of 822 E. McNeil, reported Tuesday that someone took Christmas decorations from her home.

A nativity scene was included in the decorations taken, police said.

Obituaries

SANDRIDGE - Nona M. Sandridge, 85, of Hoopeston, died at 9:45 p.m. Tuesday, Dec. 23, 1997, at the Ford County Nursing Home, Paxton. Graveside services will be held at 1 p.m. Friday at Floral Hill Cemetery. There will be no visitation. Memorials are

suggested to the Ford County Nursing Home, Paxton. Hamilton-Orr Funeral Home was in charge of

Court Dispositions



Dec. 18: Becky Lade, Sheldon, deceptive practice, pleaded guilty; \$45, restitution.

Tina Lile, Hoopeston, paid \$115 in full.

In the Hospital



Hoopeston Community Memorial Hospital

Dec. 23, 1997

Admitted: Edna Gaffney and Earl Gaffney, Hoopeston.

Discharged: Helen LaBounty, Thelma Marrs.

Weather



Mostly cloudy today. High 35. Tonight, cloudy. Low 32. Saturday, mostly cloudy. High 36, low 26. Sunday, chance of snow. High 34, low 25.

For current weather conditions, call the **Hoopeston Weather Line** at (217) 283-6221.

the high side.

On the low side, the step ladder started with Hoopeston's Chad Bruens, the number four seed, battling and beating Kelby Klink, 196-178. In the second match, Bruens bowled and defeted Herb Hoepuer, 201-164. That set up a showdown of two of the top up-and-coming bowlers in the area, Bruens and Jerome Nelson Jr.

Nelson ended Chad's chances in a very closely-contested match, 221-205, then followed that by squeaking by hammering Hank Longfellow of Wellington, 185-176.

Nelson advanced to face Varner, but was unable to battle Verner's striking, losing by a score of 224-185.

The Hoopeston area was well represented by Tony Gress, Randy Hiltz, Doug Wagoner, Dave Hughes, Lee Curry, Art Wagoner, Kenny McVicker, Brandon Hamilton and Longellow.

Next month's tournament will be held at Covington's Lanes.

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Classifieds

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Half-price sale at Resale Mart, 227 E. Main, Hoopeston. All clothing, purses, shoes. 338-364

PETS

Free: German shepherd/St. Bernard mix puppies. 8 wks. old. Will deliver. Leave message at (217) 283-5896 or (765) 869-5763

VEHICLES FOR SALE

1979 blue & silver Blazer. Very little rust. \$2,000. Call (217) 283-9537 or 283-7167. 352-358